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GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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NOTICE

If you receive a Renewal Blank with this issue, your subscription has expired. No further Bulletins or reminders can be sent to you until your renewal is received. Since war restrictions on paper have curtailed the supply of back issues, you are urged to renew immediately in order not to miss any issues which you may be unable to replace.

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Paul Almasy from Three Lions

IN MADAGASCAR A WARLIKE SPEAR DENOTES A PEACEFUL SHEPHERD

Among the mysteries of Madagascar, where drinking water pours from trees and an extinct bird once laid two-gallon eggs, the mild-mannered shepherd carries a ferocious spear for a staff. This young shepherd belongs to the Mahafaly tribe, who are descended from settlers who probably came to Madagascar across the Indian Ocean from the Orient instead of from nearby Africa. These folk tend herds of long-horned cattle and small flocks of sheep on the steppe pastures of southern Madagascar. On the island cattle outnumber people 5 to 4 and supply several large packing plants. Steak there is cheaper than potatoes. Meat and hides are war supplies Madagascar contributes to the resources stockpile of the French Committee of National Liberation (Bulletin No. 5).

GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETIN

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic School Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers in the United States and its possessions for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (stamps or money order); in Canada, 50 cents. Originally entered as second-class matter January 27, 1922; re-entered as of April 27, 1943, Post Office, Washington, D. C., under Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1943, by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C. International copyright secured. All rights reserved. Quedan reservados todos los derechos.

Italy, Battleground of Caesars, Partitioned by Mountains

THE geography of Italy has been influencing the outcome of battles decisive for civilization since Hannibal's elephant brigade lumbered down the Alps and Caesar crossed the Rubicon.

The country which has yielded perennial crops of history for southern Europe is the one that stabs most deeply into the Mediterranean. It is exposed on three coasts to foreign events and adventures. Its peninsular nature—which inspires geography's most famous figure of speech, "Italy's boot"—gives the country the Adriatic Sea at its calf, the Ionian Sea beneath its sole, and the Tyrrhenian Sea along its shin. No other European country has so long or so varied a Mediterranean coastline.

Two Major Mountain Walls Make Many Subdivisions

Italy's terrain has repeatedly channeled new events along old paths, where history has been molded by immutable mountains and unchanging sea. Alaric and Napoleon marched on Rome long before Mussolini headed in the same direction. The Saracens sailed across the Strait of Messina a thousand years ahead of the British Eighth Army.

Not counting its outlying "football" islands, Sicily and Sardinia, peninsular Italy has an area that barely exceeds 100,000 square miles. Colorado is larger, yet has only one-fortieth as many people.

The wide variety of landscape in Italy, from parched Calabria in the south through Campania and Tuscany to Lombardy and the Alps in the north, is a gift of winding mountain chains. The giant crescent of the white-shouldered Alps walls Italy off from France, Switzerland, Germany, and Yugoslavia. The winding chain of the Apennines forms a backbone that zigzags through the entire length of the peninsula; from the Italian Riviera in the northwest it slants southeast to the Adriatic, then arches southwest to drop seaward in Calabria.

The larger divisions of the country are the lofty Alps in the north, the broad plain of the Po River at their feet, the Italian Riviera adjoining France, the northern Apennines on the Ligurian Sea, the central Apennines on the Adriatic, Tuscany to the west, Campania between Rome and Naples, the southern Apennines tapering off into Calabria, and the lowlands of Apulia in the boot heel.

Half of People Live on Po Plain

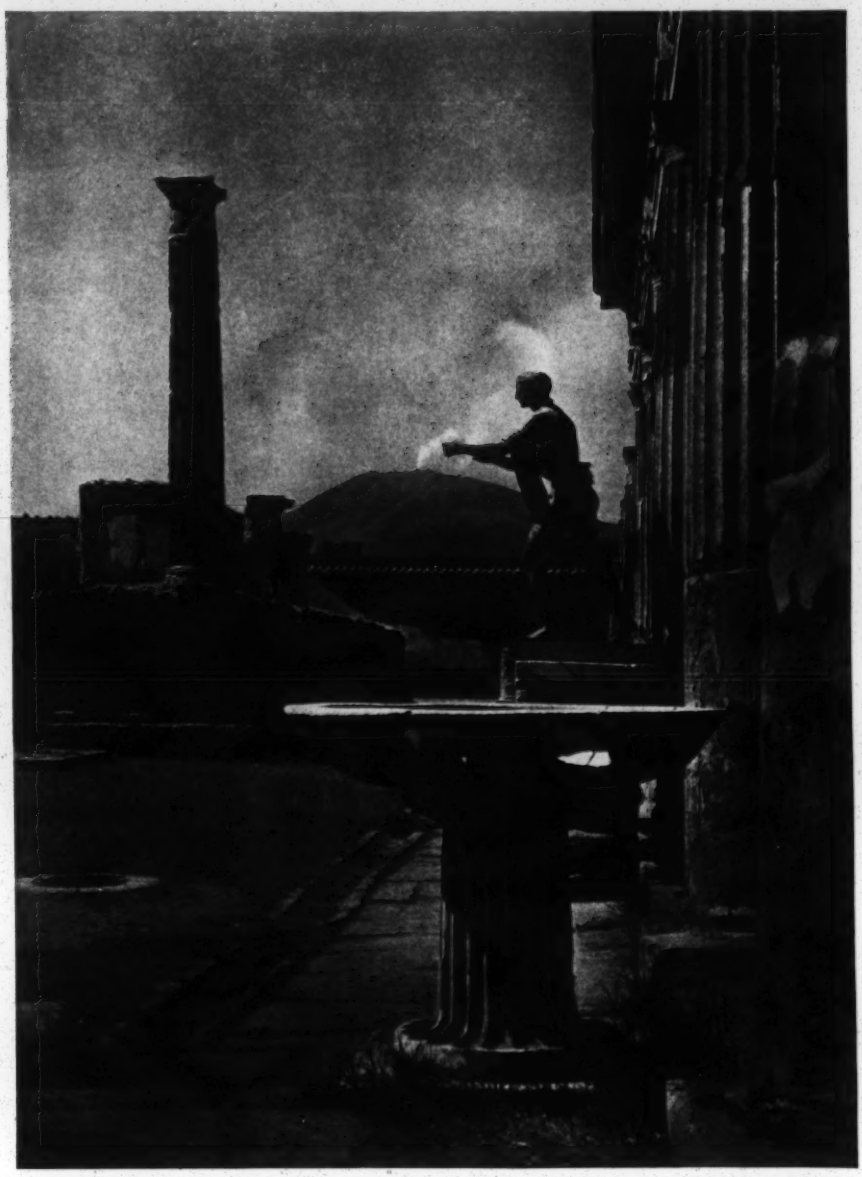
Rugged Italy puts its worst foot forward, geographically. The terrain of the Calabrian "toe," pointed toward Sicily, is rough, barren, and inhospitable. The Apulian heel to the east is perennially parched flat country, valuable for ports from which the Balkans are accessible—Taranto, Otranto, Brindisi, and Bari.

The volcanic activity encountered in southern Italy is typified by Mt. Vesuvius smoking above the Bay of Naples, brooding over resurrected Pompeii (illustration, inside cover) and modern Naples, Italy's third largest city.

On the same narrow coastal shelf west of the south-central Apennines, beside the Tiber, stands Rome, a powerhouse of Mediterranean events for 2,500 years.

Around the core of the northern Apennines are scattered such historic cities as Florence and Leghorn. Genoa, chief port of northern Italy, sits beside the Ligurian Sea and draws traffic across the mountains at its back through Bocchetta Pass.

UMI



B. Anthony Stewart

OLD VESUVIUS AND HIS VICTIMS COULD GIVE WAR A LESSON IN DESTRUCTION

Vesuvius (center background) looks down through a smoke cloud on remnants of the Pompeii he wiped out 1864 years ago with his own efficient brand of block-buster attack. Much of the buried city has been dug up from the ashes and lava. The broad open space of the Forum (left foreground) was the center of the city, on which the six main streets converged. The handsomest temple was that to Apollo (right), with its 48 stately columns and its statue of the athletic Greek god. The burial of Pompeii was the most spectacular of the many catastrophes which Italy has suffered from the volcanic streaks in its terrain (Bulletin No. 1).

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La Venta an Ancient Mexican Mecca

THE ever-searching picks and shovels of archeologists digging in southern Mexico during the past spring and summer have filled in some missing lines to disclose the picture of a tropical American Mecca or Canterbury, thronged eleven centuries ago with thousands of bronze-skinned religious pilgrims. This shrine probably was well established when Mohammed's religion was still new and Canterbury was just emerging as England's religious capital.

The discoveries in Mexico, made at La Venta in the State of Tabasco, were announced this summer by Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, President of the National Geographic Society, on the return to Washington of the fifth archeological expedition to southern Mexico under the joint auspices of the National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian Institution.

The party was led by Dr. Matthew W. Stirling of the Smithsonian. The work was conducted under arrangement with the Department of Anthropology and History of the Mexican Federal Government. This expedition was the third to explore the La Venta site.

Mounds and Giant Heads Marked Religious Area

Outstanding among the latest materials unearthed were jewelry made of jade of the highest quality ever found in the New World, mosaics, skillfully sculptured works of art, ceremonial objects, and large decorated stone altars. No carved dates were found, but comparison with sites of known age led the archeologists to estimate that La Venta flourished between 500 and 800 A.D.—700 to 1,000 years before the coming of Columbus.

One of the unusual sculptures was a green "monkey man," the four-foot figure of a monkey with an almost human face (illustration, next page).

As reconstructed, La Venta's religious center consisted of a plain dominated by a great man-made mound more than a hundred feet high. Stretching from it were lines of a dozen or more smaller mounds. Between, giant human heads sculptured from basalt gazed across the plain; and at intervals rose massive, flat-topped stone altars.

Jade Discoveries Furnish Mystery

A short distance off the religious reservation, probably, were the workshops of the artists and artisans whose skilled fingers have given La Venta its fame today. "Here," says a preliminary report of the expedition, "the ancient artisans carved with equal fidelity giant basalt heads weighing 20 tons and miniature objects of jade smaller than a fingernail and perforated with holes not much larger than the diameter of a coarse hair. With respect to stone work, this may be considered the highest art level achieved in ancient America."

Because this great center represents in its purest form the early art style widely diffused in southern Mexico, the Mexican Anthropological Association has officially given it the name "La Venta Culture." It existed at the same time as the Maya civilization of the Old Empire.

Top interest in this year's discoveries at La Venta goes to the jewelry fashioned from beautiful translucent emerald-green jade, a precious stone as valuable as emerald itself. This extraordinary jade, of the highest quality yet unearthed in the Americas, rivals the famed gem-jade of Burma, standard of world excellence.

UMI

The broad green horseshoe-shaped plain of the Po River, with four big cities on its edges, holds much of the industry and nearly half of the population of the entire country. Canal-threaded Venice and Bologna on the east, Milan in the north and Turin in the west together count more than two and a quarter million inhabitants. Milan alone has almost succeeded in rivaling Rome for size. But the rural plain is a patchwork of pastures, fields of wheat and corn, irrigated rice fields.

The Alpine section, tourist-haunted in times of peace, has been less a fence than a sliding board, dumping history and commerce into Italy's back yard. Mountain arms enclose the famous lakes of Maggiore, Como, and Garda. The boundary loops over some of western Europe's highest crests—Mount Blanc (15,780 feet), Monte Rosa (15,217), the Matterhorn (14,780). Railroads cut through at the passes of Mont Cenis on the west, between Turin and France; Simplon and St. Gotthard on the north, between Milan and Switzerland; and Brenner on the northeast, between Verona and Germany.

Note: Italy is shown on the National Geographic Society's Map of Europe and the Near East, and Map of Classical Lands of the Mediterranean. A price list of maps may be obtained from the Society's Washington headquarters.

See also "Italy, from Roman Ruins to Radio," in the *National Geographic Magazine*, March, 1940*; and these GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS: "Ports of Northwest Italy Cringe Beneath Bombs," February 8, 1943; and "War Targets in Italy: Industrial Turin and Frequented Naples," January 20, 1941. *(Issues marked by an asterisk are included in a special list of Magazines available to teachers at 10¢ each in groups of ten. The list and an order blank are available upon request to the Society's Washington headquarters.)*

Bulletin No. 1, October 4, 1943.

Branson De Cou

SENTINELS OR SABOTEURS, ITALY'S ALPINE PEAKS ARE NEVER NEUTRAL

Since Hannibal's time the Alps have been belligerents in Italy's battles, taking the side of the army at the highest altitude. Soldiers in the valley or on the lower slopes have had the disadvantage of being exposed and of having to advance against the pull of gravity. In the first World War the Dolomite sector of the Alps, southeast of the Brenner Pass, was an icy battlefield between Italy and Austria, where soldiers fought fist to fist in a snowy labyrinth of ravines, glaciers, rock needles, precipices, and paths through passes 7,000 and 9,000 feet above sea level. The Dolomite region receives its name from peculiar formations of dolomitic limestone which protrude abruptly from the smoother shoulder of a mountain. The barren limestone is eroded (above) into fantastic pinnacles, spires, and domes, often streaked with brilliant colors.

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Island Bastions in the Solomons Barricade

IN THE eight months since Guadalcanal was wrested from the Japanese, the U. S. Army, Navy, and Marines have taken also the key islands in the center of the Solomons chain and pushed the Japanese back into the northern third.

These positions form a barricade across the South Pacific 1,030 miles northeast of Australia, 880 miles northwest of the American base in New Caledonia.

NEW GEORGIA. Central bastion of the island barricade is New Georgia, one of ten large islands in the Solomons group. It is about 45 miles long, shaped like some outlandish big-headed beast. In the island's "snout," on the west, is Munda, important airfield which Americans captured in August.

New Georgia is generally mountainous in the north and east, reaching its highest point at knife-edged Kusage, nearly 2,700 feet high, in the northwest. Double-headed Karu-Mehimba, 2,670 feet high, stands in the east-central area.

Along the southern shore and for some distance inland the terrain is chiefly jungle-blanketed plain, about 200 feet above sea level. Viru Harbor indents the southeast coast, where Americans made a beachhead. The curving southwestern shore is blocked off by a chain of islets and reefs which enclose the beautiful Isabel is one of the largest of the Solomons—110 miles long and 25 miles wide.

Small Rendova Island lies seven miles off New Georgia, while larger Santa Isabel parallels it about 70 miles to the east. Round Kolombangara is just across the deep Kula Gulf to the northwest, with Vella Lavella beyond.

SANTA ISABEL. Ribbed with mountains green from base to summit, Santa Isabel is one of the largest of the Solomons—110 miles long and 25 miles wide.

Wild and thinly populated, the island has settlements only at its ends. In the Kia district at the northwest tip is Rekata Bay, where United States bombers hit Japanese seaplanes and boats. On the southeastern tip are the villages of Sepi and Tunnibuli.

Coast islanders are friendly, go visiting and voyaging in 50-foot canoes, live by hunting and fishing, ride surfboards for sport. Bushmen, shy and suspicious, cling to the mountains.

Coconut plantations have been the big business of the island. Copra was shipped in sizable quantities before the war.

VELLA LAVELLA. About 40 miles northwest of New Georgia stands mountainous, densely wooded Vella Lavella, which American forces occupied in a dramatic move to outflank the Japanese on Kolombangara. Sharp peaks in the saw-toothed ridges rise to 3,000 feet. Scenic features include several dormant volcanoes and some hot sulphur springs. On the northeast coast sulphur is found.

An area of about 200 square miles makes Vella Lavella one of the larger Solomons. It is paddle-shaped, tapering to a handle in the south. Although numerous bays indent the shores, coral reefs obstruct navigation all around the island.

Widely spaced around the coast are missions, trading stations, and coconut plantations. The copra industry, started about 1915, has made considerable progress. The native population is normally little more than 600.

RENDOVA. Shaped like an inverted dipper, Rendova has a "cup" 25 miles long and ten miles deep. Thickly forested and ridged with mountains, the island rises to the 3,488-foot summit of Rendova Peak, an extinct volcano. On some slopes the woods are bordered by beaches of black sand.

Protective reefs gird Rendova Harbor, near the island's northernmost point.

UMI

The finding at La Venta of objects made from both gem-jade and less valuable sorts of the stone emphasizes a mystery that so far has baffled archeologists: the origin of the jade worked into ornaments abundantly by early Americans. No natural deposits of jade have been found in all Middle America, and few in the New World. Where the ancient traders found the green stone is still a puzzling question.

Dolls in Children's Tomb

Among the jade treasures were a number of highly polished tubular beads as clear as emerald. Other jade stones were shaped like pumpkins, turtles, axheads, ear plugs, and disk pendants. The high quality of the jade jewels indicates that their early American owner must have been powerful and wealthy. By today's standards, a single bead might have a value of $400.

Child-size ear plugs and carved stone dolls in tombs showed that mourning parents had chosen La Venta as the burial place for their children. The dolls had eyes of black obsidian or glittering pyrites (fool's gold).

Another jewel surprise yielded by this season's explorations at La Venta was the discovery of an amber pendant. Amber was uncommon in early Middle America.

El Tigre Shows His Face

Although the monkey god was given standing room at La Venta, the animal which commanded respect was the jaguar. *El tigre*, as it is called by modern Mexicans, is still regarded as the lord of the jungle. A conventionalized pattern of the jaguar's face was used to decorate axheads.

A remarkable mosaic of green stone blocks laid in asphalt was found to portray a jaguar's face.

The collections discovered at La Venta are now on exhibition in the National Museum of Mexico at Mexico, D.F.

Note: For further information, see these articles in the *National Geographic Magazine:* "La Venta's Green Stone Tigers," September, 1943; and "Finding Jewels of Jade in a Mexican Swamp," November, 1942; and in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, September, 1941: "Expedition Unearths Buried Masterpieces of Carved Jade."

Richard H. Stewart

MONKEY METHUSELAH WAS A GOD A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

This broken figure of a solemn monkey god, carved from green serpentine, was one of the many striking sculptures adorning the plazas and temples which attracted thousands of early American religious pilgrims to La Venta between 500 and 800 A.D. The La Venta people resembled other primitive folk in giving their animal gods some human features, like the carved monkey's old-man face. The paws are carved above his head, where they touch the tail curled over his back. His missing feet were probably broken off by conquerors who ravaged La Venta's religious shrines more than a thousand years ago. The footless carving still stands four feet high. Members of the National Geographic Society-Smithsonian Institution Expedition propped up the monkey god to guard their camp headquarters until he was shipped to Mexico, D. F., for exhibition.

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Sicily Turns from Battlefield to Base

TO GREEK colonials, Roman Caesars, and a dozen other rulers of Sicily, add AMG (Allied Military Government).

The AMG, following closely behind the armed forces of the United Nations invasion, has taken over the historic mid-Mediterranean spot as the first territory to come under its administration. Now Sicily is serving as a base for pushing the attack on Europe's mainland.

This volcanic island, poised at the toe of the Italian boot, is the political football of the Mediterranean. Throughout history it has been kicked around by Greek tyrants, Roman Caesars, Byzantine emperors, Saracen rulers, Norman kings, and in modern times a dizzying succession of Spanish, French, Austrian, and British sovereigns before Garibaldi gathered it into Italy's arms in 1860.

World Sulphur Center until 1909

Sicily's area of 9,926 square miles makes it the largest island in the Mediterranean. Its situation has made it often the most important as well. This three-cornered mountainous chunk of earth (map, next page) almost plugs up the central bottleneck of the Mediterranean.

Africa lies only ninety miles to the southwest across the sea's Sicilian Narrows. Europe lies only two miles to the east across the Strait of Messina. Traffic or tragedy from either half of the sea has paid toll to or taken toll of Sicily as it passed by.

In 1937 Mussolini acknowledged its importance as "the geographical center of Italy's empire."

Menacing Mount Etna, Europe's highest active volcano, is Sicily's trademark. Eruptions that occur every five or six years often blow off a few feet of its height or build it higher than its usual 10,741 feet above sea level.

The volcano is associated also with sulphur, the fiery mineral over which Sicily had a virtual world monopoly until the 20th century introduced American sulphur from Texas and Louisiana to the chemical market. In pre-war years Sicily's output helped Italy hold second place in sulphur production. About 64 per cent of the Italian total came from Sicily's hundred mines. Brimstone blasted from subterranean galleries was baked in giant furnaces, the sulphur being melted out and cast into solid golden blocks.

Towns Full of Farmers

Once enriched by the salt waters that brought commerce to her ports, modern Sicily has been impoverished by lack of fresh water. Winter floods and summer droughts plague farmers. Even the largest river, the Simeto, curling southeast around Mount Etna across the Catania plain, cannot be counted on for year-round navigation. Sicily's yearly thirst has been blamed for the island's poverty and attendant evils, such as brigandage and the outlaw gangs of the secret Mafia organization, as well as the heavy emigration.

In spite of drought, however, the island that was one of Rome's granaries is still mainly agricultural. Wheat and fruit rank next to sulphur as a source of income. A good portion of Italy's macaroni is made from Sicily's wheat.

The fruit industry paints the island's mountain landscape with bright bands: lemon groves on the lower levels, oranges and citrons above, silvery olive trees

UMI

Two deep channels provide entrance. Renard Cove offers safe anchorage on the island's south side.

Natives make a peacetime living by gathering coconuts and preparing copra for export. Rendova's name is traced to a corruption of the word "rendezvous." The reputation of the island is a bit on the sinister side, with tales of burning wrecked vessels and murdering their crews.

RUSSELL ISLANDS. The two main islands of the Russell group, Pavuvu and Banika, are surrounded by a hundred pin-point islets. They are scattered over 20 miles of water but their combined area is only about double that of the District of Columbia. They lie between Guadalcanal and New Georgia.

Most of the islands rise abruptly from the ocean, without surrounding shoals. Depths of more than 100 feet are common close to shore. Pavuvu is covered with wooded hills, the highest rising to 1,600 feet.

Fifty years and more ago headhunters of Pavuvu, Banika, and Savo were the scourge of Guadalcanal. Their frequent canoe raids drove Guadalcanal natives inland from the coast. Missionaries and peaceful trade have by now made the natives friendly. A large export business in coconuts and timber has developed.

Note: The Solomon Islands are shown in a large-scale inset on the National Geographic Society's new Map of the Pacific Ocean and the Bay of Bengal, just published as a supplement to the September, 1943, *Magazine*.

For additional information, see "A Woman's Experiences among Stone Age Solomon Islanders," in the *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1942; and "Treasure Islands of Australasia," June, 1942*; and these GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS: "War Calls the Roll in the Solomon Islands, from B to T," March 8, 1943; and "Solomon Islands, Where Marines and Japs Clash," October 5, 1942.

Bulletin No. 3, October 4, 1943.

Douglas L. Oliver

IN THE SCHOOL-LESS SOLOMONS, PLAY IS A BOY'S ONLY HOMEWORK

Though several mission schools exist, there are no public schools for the young Solomon Islander. He must learn to take his place in the community by imitating—and helping—his elders. Boys readily imitate their fathers, who often tend them while the mothers are working in the garden. When coconuts get ripe and fall, the men gather them to open and dry for copra. These youngsters are also gathering coconuts, carrying the little load on a miniature framework on their shoulders as men would carry a heavier burden such as a several-hundred-pound pig. Fathers can manage their children's training in the Solomons; in normal times only one man out of eight is employed away from home. In the United States about six out of eight work away from their homes.

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Geo-Graphic Brevities

BAMBOO, ARMY EMERGENCY FOOD, AN OLD ORIENTAL "HANDY ANDY"

BOILED bamboo, Army style, is likely to become a familiar dish to the American soldier on his own in Pacific lands. The War Department's manual on emergency food plants recommends it.

The edible young shoots of bamboo can be spotted near the base of older stalks. They must be stripped of their hairy sheaths and cooked—cut up for boiling, left whole for roasting. Result: an asparaguslike delicacy.

Americans now pushing through the jungles of Polynesia and Malaysia knew bamboo at home as one of the savory ingredients of chop suey. There it has also meant fishing poles, canes, and phonograph needles. But in its native tropical climes bamboo is a wood of all work, a fiber as well as a food. Surprisingly to many people, it is not a tree but a grass—in fact, one of the world's largest and most serviceable grasses.

Bamboo grows in clumps like many smaller grasses. Deep into the soil the plant thrusts roots which make a strong underground network. From them emerge the familiar jointed stalks which may soar 120 feet and measure more than a foot in diameter. Growth is rapid. The tallest stalks may be bare of leaves for 75 feet. At maturity some species are so tough that knives and "whetstones" are fashioned from the hard outer coats.

Old as bamboo is in the service of man, a complete compilation of its uses is still unfinished business. There is a story that a missionary wrote up 440 uses but withheld his list because he was sure he would come across others.

Oriental builders and artisans look upon bamboo as one of their basic natural resources. Split stalks are worked into floors, walls, and roofs of houses. Bamboo scaffolding is a familiar sight in the Far East. Stalks are ready-made water pipes.

A house can be completely furnished, as well as built, in the bamboo manner—with chairs, tables, beds, baskets, ladders, curtain rods, bird cages, flower stands, mats, tools, and teapots of this all-purpose material.

Much transportation in the Far East relies on bamboo vehicles. Junks and sampans are commonly built with bamboo upper works. Sailboats have bamboo masts. Split stems do for ropes. Jinrikishas and sedan chairs of bamboo are seen throughout the East. Cart and wheelbarrow bodies are also made of this treelike grass.

Even the leaves are used. They are sewn together, shinglelike, to make dresses. Some people relish them as food. To Orientals, bamboo is truly the staff of life.

FRENCH ALIGN VAST EMPIRE WITH UNITED NATIONS

ALLIED recognition of the French Committee of National Liberation once more underlines the tremendous value and extent of the colonial empire which has acknowledged the Committee's authority. Only Japanese-dominated French Indo-China is still outside the anti-Axis fold.

Supporting the French Committee are possessions in Africa, South America, the Near East, and Asia. Its islands are scattered along sea lanes through the Atlantic and the Pacific, the Caribbean Sea, and the Indian Ocean.

These far-flung lands, often key areas with relation to the war, total over

UMI

farther up, and vineyards on the higher slopes.

While Sicily is a land of farms, the majority of the four million Sicilians are village, town, and city dwellers. One-tenth of the people live in Palermo, the capital and largest city. Farmers sublease small strips of land from the agents of owners, live in the nearest community, and drive to the fields in donkey carts whose wheels fit the ruts of Roman chariots. This system of absentee ownership, by which an estimated 200 families were able to own one-sixth of the island's area, has created such problems of poverty that large estates have been threatened with confiscation and redistribution to the men who work them.

Once Held Europe's Largest City

Crowded Sicily is about the size of Vermont but has more than ten times as many people. Two of Italy's largest cities are Sicilian. Palermo, normally with more than 400,000 people, ranks sixth on Italy's city roster, and Catania, with about a quarter-million, ranks eleventh. The port of Messina, however, with fewer than 195,000 people, is one of Italy's most important ports because of its situation at the Sicilian side of the ferry link with Italy.

Of all the seaside cities that surround the island's thinly peopled mountain core, none has had a more varied history than Syracuse. Now a port of some 50,000 inhabitants, in the days of Sicily's Grecian glory this was Europe's largest city, with more than a million inhabitants.

Note: Sicily is shown on the National Geographic Society's Map of Europe and the Near East, and Map of Classical Lands of the Mediterranean.

For additional information, see "Sicily Again in the Path of War," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for September, 1943; and these GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS: "The Mediterranean's Sicilian Narrows, Water-Bridge to Europe," March 1, 1943; and "Sicily Gives First German Toe Hold in Mediterranean," February 17, 1941.

Bulletin No. 4, October 4, 1943.

H. E. Eastwood and Irwin Alleman

THREE-SIDED SICILY'S MANY-SIDED CAREER HAS BEEN RECORDED IN ANCIENT EPIC AND MODERN HEADLINES

Known earlier as Trinacria because of its triangular shape, Sicily at the dawn of Europe's history was mentioned by Homer in the Odyssey as the scene of Ulysses' adventure with Scylla and Charybdis. The Charybdis whirlpool is still recognized just outside Messina's harbor. The Strait of Messina is still a main route for Mediterranean traffic, where Italy's hills are in full view from Sicily and the shadow of lofty Mount Etna falls on the mainland at sunset. Greeks colonized Syracuse, once Europe's largest city. Saracen invaders named Marsala (Mars-al-Allah, "Allah's Harbor"). Gela, Scoglitti, Augusta, and Sciacca were among the towns that entered modern history as landing sites for the United Nations invasion last July.

From Marsala's west coast vineyards to Catania's east coast rice fields, Sicily is farming country. But sulphur, the island's chief industry, dominates the big triangle enclosed between Porto Empedocle, Licata, and Enna. The Anapo River is considered an oddity for its marshes of papyrus, the grass that in Egypt gave men paper and paper's name; papyrus grows wild nowhere else in Europe.

4,000,000 square miles, with more than 47,000,000 people. They are rich in resources of minerals, food, and men (illustrations, cover and below).

The list, which reads like an atlas index, is as follows:

		Sq. Mi. Area	*Population*
Africa	French North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia)	1,057,933	16,000,000
	French West Africa	1,815,768	15,000,000
	French Equatorial Africa	979,878	3,500,000
	French Somaliland	8,492	45,000
The Near East	The Levant States	57,900	3,650,000
Asia	French India	196	300,000
South America	French Guiana	65,041	37,000
Islands	Madagascar (Indian Ocean)	241,094	3,800,000
	Réunion (Indian Ocean)	970	209,000
	Martinique (West Indies)	385	250,000
	Guadeloupe (West Indies)	583	305,000
	St. Pierre and Miquelon (North Atlantic)	93	4,000
	New Caledonia (South Pacific)	8,548	54,000
	New Hebrides (South Pacific)	5,790	45,000
	French Oceania (South Pacific)	1,520	44,000

Bulletin No. 5, October 4, 1943.

Burton Holmes from Galloway

FROM PEANUT MOUNTAINS DAKAR SENDS WORLD'S PRIZE PEANUT SHIPMENTS

The abundant peanut crop of French West Africa is one of numerous food resources made available to the United Nations from lands acknowledging the leadership of the French Committee of National Liberation. The mountainous piles of nuts in bags (left) and loose (right) may be peanuts to you, but to the British they are groundnuts and to the French *arachides* or *cacahouettes*. Some of the nuts are processed into oil in Dakar's refineries. Most are shipped away, the majority in normal times reaching Marseille, where they are made into an oil that substitutes for or is mixed with olive oil for cooking and for canning fish, into margarine, shortening, and soap. Peanut shipments are responsible for Dakar's peacetime rating as one of the busiest half-dozen harbors under French control. At times this port lays claim to shipping more peanuts than any other place in the world.